

1. (currently amended) A process for the manufacture of a baleable carboxylate terminated polymer comprising polymerizing at least one conjugated diene in the presence of an organolithium initiator substantially to completion and terminating said reaction ~~via the addition of the polymerization by adding~~ carbon dioxide so as to provide said carboxylate terminated polymer, wherein said carboxylate terminated polymer has a bulk viscosity of greater than 45 and a solution viscosity of less than 75 cP.

2. (currently amended) The process of claim 1 wherein said conjugated diene is selected from the group consisting one or more of 1,3-butadiene, isoprene, 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadiene, and 1,3-pentadiene, and mixtures thereof.

3. (original) The process of claim 1 further comprising additional monomers including vinyl aromatic hydrocarbons and alkenes.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein said carbon dioxide is added in an amount of at least about 0.5 a molar equivalent of said organolithium initiator.

7. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein said carbon dioxide is added in an amount greater than the amount of said organolithium initiator.

8. (withdrawn)

9. (original) The process of claim 5 wherein a polar compound is added to said carboxylate terminated polymer.

10. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein the polymerization is continuous.

11. (withdrawn)

12. (withdrawn)

13. (withdrawn)

14. (withdrawn)

15. (withdrawn)

16. (withdrawn)

17. (withdrawn)

18. (withdrawn)

19. (withdrawn)

20. (withdrawn)

21. (new) The process of claim 9 wherein said polar compound is selected from maleic anhydride, tetramethyl ethylene diamine, 2-ethylhexanoic acid, and mixtures thereof.

22. (new) The process of claim 1 wherein the carboxylate terminated polymer has a number average molecular weight of from about 100,000 to 300,000.

23. (new) The process of claim 22 wherein the carboxylate terminated polymer
a² has a number average molecular weight of from about 150,000 to 250,000.

THE OFFICE ACTION

In the Office Action issued March 3, 2003, the Examiner made the following objections/rejections.

The Examiner indicated that a further election between Group I', corresponding to claims 1-7 and 9-10, and Group I'', corresponding to claim 8, must be made.

The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7 and 9-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 3,791,888 to Hudson ("Hudson").

The Examiner further indicated that references AQ, AR, AS, BP, BQ and BR in the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement do not meet the requirements of 37 C.F.R. §1.98(b)(5) in that they do not properly include the date, page or author.

REMARKS

A corrected IDS form 1449 is being submitted herewith to address the concerns the Examiner raised with regard to references AQ, AR, AS, BP, BQ and BR. Applicants submit that the disclosures now comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.98(b)(5).

In response to the restriction requirement, Applicants confirm election of the invention of Group I', corresponding to claims 1-7 and 9-10.

With regard to the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, rejection, claim 2 has been amended to recite the selected group for the conjugated diene in proper Markush form. With regard to the Examiner's objection to the use of the term "solution viscosity" without reference to the conditions under which the viscosity is measured, Applicants submit that no lack of definitiveness arise by utilization of this characteristic in the claims. Particularly, it is widely accepted that solution viscosity measurements are taken at 25°C. One of ordinary skill in the art knows that such measurements are performed at 25°C absent an indication that they were taken at